

From the desk of State Senator John Griesheimer



Dear Friends,

The 2006 legislative session has come to an end, and now is the time to review the highlights of the past several months. The Senate started off the year with momentum, but because things didn't run as smoothly in the House, time ran out before we could pass a few key pieces of legislation.

I had the honor of serving as chair of the Senate Economic Development, Tourism and Local Government Committee, as vice-chair of the Senate Transportation Committee, and as a member of the Commerce, Energy and the Environment, and Ways

and Means committees.

Last year was the toughest during my Senate term due to the necessary budget cuts we had to make. Fortunately, the hard decisions paid off this year with the first budget surplus in five years. The economic shift has spurred the creation of nearly 50,000 new jobs since the governor took office in 2005, and has also enabled us to give state workers their first significant pay raise in several years. I am excited for what the future will bring for our state.

As for my personal legislative goals, I succeeded in advancing legislation that will enhance the economy, make emissions inspections more convenient, make it easier for senior citizens to renew

their driver's licenses, and increase safety on Missouri roads and highways.

To learn more about what happened in state government this year, please read this legislative report. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me or my office. It has truly been an honor and a privilege to represent you in the Missouri Senate for the past four years.

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Capitol Office Staff

One of a senator's most important assets is a dependable and friendly staff. I am fortunate to have both Carolyn Case and Chris Sutherland to assist me in my office in Jefferson City.

Feel free to contact

them if you have questions about the Missouri Legislature, concerns about how the laws affect you, or simply want to book a tour of the Capitol for your family or group.





In October of last year, Sen. Griesheimer hosted a town meeting in Union to discuss the emissionstesting program, which the owners of more than 1 million vehicles in the greater St. Louis area must go through every other year to renew their license plates. Most agreed that ever since the program started in 2000, it has been a nightmare for consumers because testing methods were out-of-date, repairs on older vehicles were costly and having to go to one place for a safety inspection and go somewhere else for an emissions test was a major hassle.

At the meeting, a representative from the Environmental Protection Agency explained that the metropolitan communities of St. Louis, including Franklin and St. Louis counties, are collectively designated as a "moderate ozone non-attainment area." Federal law mandates that such urbanized areas implement a vehicle emissions-inspection program. This means Missouri nixing the system is not an option, but Sen. Griesheimer made it his priority to at least improve it.

This session, he introduced and the Legislature passed Senate Bill 583 to make Missouri emissions regulations more consumer-friendly beginning Sept. 1, 2007. Among its many provisions, the legislation

decentralizes the emissions-inspection program so that consumers will have more convenient places to get their vehicles tested.

The measure also modernizes the testing method and defines the procedures that stations must follow to become certified emissions inspectors. Cars and light-duty pickup trucks and vans with diesel-powered engines will now be subjected to the inspection, and the fee is capped at \$24.

To cut down on the number of unnecessary inspections, the bill exempts the following vehicles:

- New vehicles for four years after their model year, provided that at the two-year safety inspection, the vehicle has fewer than 40,000 miles on the odometer.
- Motor vehicles driven fewer than 12,000 miles between biennial safety inspections.
- Vehicles manufactured before 1996, but these still must undergo a gas-cap pressure test, which would be included in the vehicle safety inspection.
- Heavy-duty trucks with gross vehicle weight ratings of more than 8,500 pounds.



Frustration at the gas pump and with utility bills has inspired Sen. Griesheimer and fellow lawmakers to start planning for Missouri's long-term fuel supply.

Energizing Missouri's Fuel Supply

In light of the nationwide energy crunch, the 2006 Legislature took significant steps to move Missouri toward a more environmentally sound energy policy.

Lawmakers approved House Bill 1270, which requires that most unleaded gasoline sold in Missouri contain a 10 percent ethanol blend beginning Jan. 1, 2008. Ethanol can be derived from agricultural products, such as corn.

The new standard will help Missouri farm families, significantly boost the state's economy and improve air quality. Plus, the more ethanol Missouri uses, the less the state will rely on costly foreign oil imports.



Answering a Question of Domain

Sen. Griesheimer and his colleagues believe that bulldozing the homes of hardworking Missouri families to make way for strip malls is downright unfair. That is why the Legislature sent to the governor a bill combating eminent domain abuse in Missouri.

House Bill 1944 addresses the problems created when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled last year that governments can seize private property for economic

purposes, such as an increased tax base or job growth.



Among its many provisions, HB 1944:

- Prohibits eminent domain from being used in projects solely for purposes of economic development.
- Delineates that when eminent domain is employed for public use, such as improving utilities or building new roads, property owners will be paid based on several factors including heritage value, fair market value, willingness of the owner to sell the property and the costs of relocation and replacement.
- Shields farmland from being designated as "blighted."

With this measure, which becomes effective Aug. 28, 2006, the Show-Me State can show that public need comes before private greed.

Unable to Fix Broken Tax Breaks

Last year Sen. Griesheimer was appointed to chair the Senate Interim Committee on Tax Increment Financing (TIF). Missouri began using TIF in 1982 as a way for local governments to spur economic development in struggling areas.

TIF gives private developers a portion of sales and/or property taxes generated by their development projects. Essentially, the better the tax break a government offers, the more interested a company will be to build in that area.

However, the economic boost comes at the expense of the public, because revenue increases from the new development go back to the developer rather than toward local schools and services.

Based on committee findings, Sen. Griesheimer corralled his fellow senators in efforts to improve

the TIF system with Senate Bill 832.

Among its many provisions, the bill would have banned the use of TIF on:

- Certain undeveloped and agricultural lands.
- Projects with solely residential purposes.

100-year-old flood plains.

Many agreed that TIF needed to be revised, but the House would not accept the Senate



Sen. Griesheimer discusses property rights on the Senate floor.

plan, and the bill died. Sen. Griesheimer hopes to resuscitate it next year.

Preserving Election Integrity

It is every American's duty to vote, and it is every American's right to have that vote counted. That is why the Legislature passed Senate Bill 1014 ensuring that Missouri elections are fair and honest. The new election safeguards will be in place for the November 2006 general election.

The Missouri Voter Protection Act does the following:

- Instills greater confidence in the election process by requiring that all voters provide photo identification when casting a ballot.
- Exempts those who are over 65, disabled and home-bound or
 - Anyone with religious objections. Anyone without a photo I.D. will be provided with one for free.
- States that anyone who intimidates or harasses a voter to prevent them from voting will be subject to criminal prosecution.
- Makes it a felony for using violence or knowingly providing false information to keep a Missourian from voting.

Sen. Griesheimer is known by his fellow lawmakers for his ability to orchestrate a compromise between differing viewpoints.

Down-the-Road Improvements

Sen. Griesheimer sponsored Senate Bill 1001 to make getting driver's licenses easier for senior citizens who have trouble proving lawful presence with a valid birth certificate. The measure, which received final approval from the General Assembly, also increases road safety by ensuring that teenagers have more experience and fewer distractions while driving.

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Provider Fraud

As much as \$575 million a year in taxpayer dollars is lost due to fraud by Medicaid providers. The most common fraud of this kind is overstating

labor and billing multiple times for the same service or for fake prescriptions.

Because this kind of fraud steals from the taxpayers and the poor, the Senate passed a measure with a provision stiffening the penalties for Medicaid providers who defraud the system.

Unfortunately, the House would not approve the bill, which would have also banned perpetrators

from participating in Medicaid for 10 years.

The Legislaturewas so close to better protecting the system that provides our state's most vulnerable citizens with quality health care. Next year, lawmakers plan to try again.

SB 1001 states that:

- Those who are 65 or older can use a previously issued Missouri driver's license, instruction permit or nondriver's license as proof of lawful presence when renewing their driver's licenses.
- Those younger than 65 who have had a driver's license for at least 15 years but do not have the necessary documents to prove lawful presence can apply for a one-year extension for a nominal fee.
- Teen drivers must now have 40, rather than 20, hours of driving instruction, including at least 10 hours of nighttime driving.
- For the first six months, those with intermediate driver's licenses cannot have in their vehicle more than one passenger who is under the age of 19 and not a member of their immediate family. After six months, the intermediate driver's licensee is limited to three such passengers.

Enhancing State and Local Economies

Also approved by lawmakers is Sen. Griesheimer's bill that will keep a major auto-manufacturing plant in Missouri. Senate Bill 645 revises the Business Use Incentives for Large Scale Development (BUILD) program, which provides tax credits

to qualified businesses through bonds for a negotiated amount of the total project cost.

The legislation enables DaimlerChrysler, which has two plants in Fenton, to take part in the BUILD program so the company will continue operating within the borders of the Show-Me State, thereby boosting the economy at the state and local levels.

The automaker plans to modernize its Fenton plants with state-of-the-art manufacturing capabilities. The expansion project, which would span the next five to seven years, calls for the company's investment of



more than \$1 billion.

DaimlerChrysler has 6,200 employees at the two plants. In order to receive the state incentives, the company must retain that employment level for at least the next three years.

With the success of SB 645, state and local governments can now fulfill their pledges to put \$54 million toward the plan; of this amount, \$16 million would be directed to job training, and another \$16 million would fund industrial development bonds.

As chairman of the Senate Economic Development Committee and the voice for his constituents, Sen. Griesheimer commends his fellow lawmakers for having supported this measure.

Griesheimer's Consumer-Friendly Bill Muted by Cable Industry

As a steadfast advocate for consumer rights, Sen. Griesheimer sponsored Senate Bill 816, which would have modernized Missouri's telecommunications sector and injected a new wave of competition into the cable industry by allowing certain telephone companies to be granted a statewide franchise for providing video services to consumers.

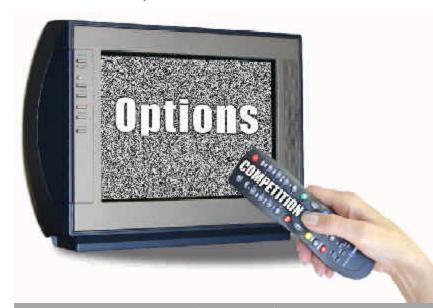
Current Missouri law requires that before a company can provide video service in the state, it must acquire a franchise license from each city it wants to serve. And because those licenses are expensive, the cost gets passed on to customers. This hindering process, which can take months or sometimes even years, is one reason cable has dominated the video-services industry.

Now phone companies want in on the deal, but are roadblocked by a franchise system that was set up before today's technological capabilities were even fathomed. Every system at some point needs to be reformed, and Sen. Griesheimer felt it was time

> for lawmakers to fix Missouri's videofranchising process.

> Competition in the marketplace is never a bad thing when it comes to consumers. But afraid of that very competition, the cable industry's lobbying efforts were fierce, and unfortunately, successful.

Sen. Griesheimer's bill never made it out of the Senate, despite the many benefits it would have offered to consumers. He still stands by the intent of SB 816, and declares that the initiative would have given consumers a choice—in programming and what comes out of their pockets. He plans to bring up this issue again next year.



Gubernatorial Appointments



Thomas Irwin
St. Louis Regional
Convention And Sports
Complex Authority



Charles Davis Missouri Real Estate Commission



Gary Toelke Advisory Committee for 911 Service Oversight



Charles Nordwald State Tax Commission



Robbie L. Brouk Advisory Commission for Clinical Perfusionists



Brad Mitchell Missouri Ethics Commission

Other Legislation Sponsored by Sen. Griesheimer

PASSED



SB 1056 — Allows city of Washington and other communities to expand revenue capabilities to make infrastructure improvements related to transportation development districts.

FAILED

SB 696 – Would have allowed communities in Franklin County to form a Theater, Cultural Arts, and Entertainment District.

SB 646 – Would have simplified the procedure with which a sewer district can be formed or reorganized.

SB 904—Would have outlined the design-and-build process for state buildings and enabled the construction of the women's prison in Chillicothe.

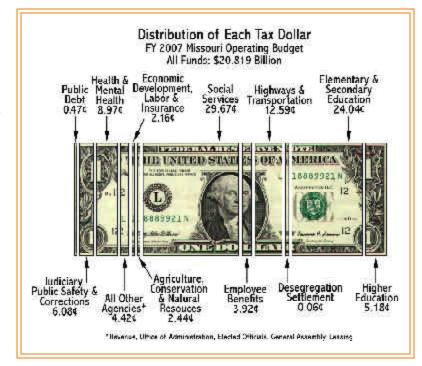
SB 1101—With voter approval, would have allowed the city of Sullivan and surrounding areas to levy a tax on tourists to go toward the local tourism industry.

\$\$ MO MONEY \$\$

Each year, the General Assembly must determine how to spend taxpayer money for the upcoming fiscal year. This session, the Legislature passed a \$20.8 billion budget reflecting responsible financial planning.

The 2007 Fiscal Year Budget allots:

- More than \$76 million for public schools in the 26th Senate District.
- A 2 percent increase for state public colleges and universities.
- A \$400 million increase for construction and maintenance of roads and bridges.
- \$6.2 billion for the Department of Social Services, a 4 percent increase over last year.
- A \$200 million increase for Medicaid.
- A 4 percent pay raise for state employees, except elected officials.



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